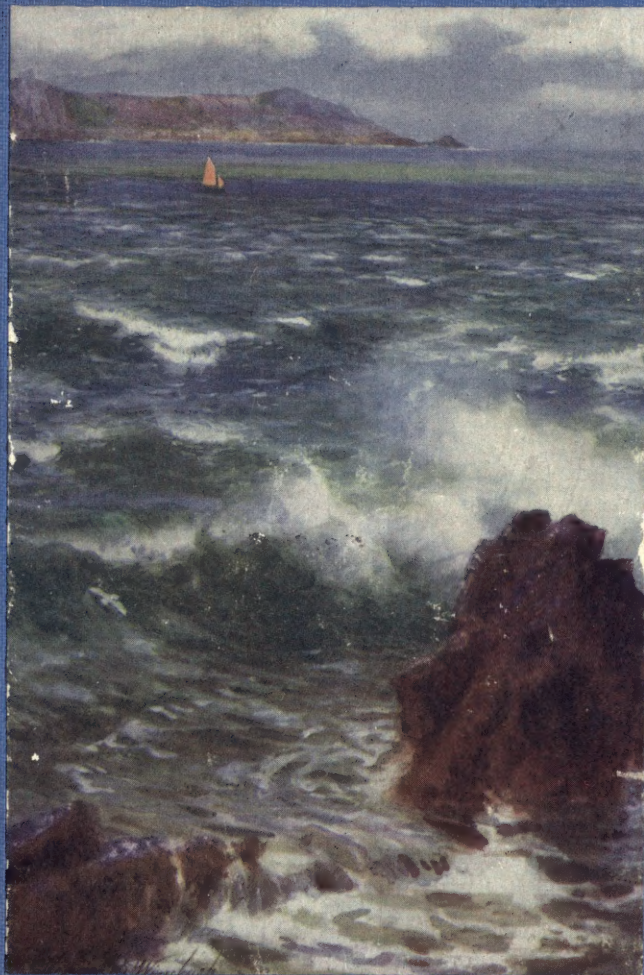




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CHANNEL ISLANDS

JOSEPH E. MORRIS



BEAUTIFUL BRITAIN



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Beautiful Britain

The Channel Islands

By
Joseph E Morris-B.A.



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THE CHANNEL ISLANDS

CHAPTER I

JERSEY

IF on a fine day we take our stand on one of the terraces, or battlements, of Mont Orgueil Castle—and there is hardly a pleasanter spot in Jersey in which to idle away a sunny summer afternoon—we shall realize more completely than geography books can tell us that the Channel Islands really constitute the last remnants of the ancient Norman dukedom that still belong to the English Crown. For there, across the water, not more than twenty miles away, and stretching from north of Carteret far southwards towards Granville and Mont St. Michel, is the long white line of the Norman coast itself—on a clear day it is even possible to make out the tall, twin spires of Coutances, half a dozen miles inland, crowning, like Lincoln or Ely, their far-seen hill. No part

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of France, it is true, approaches so closely to Jersey as Cap de la Hague (the extreme north-west point of the Cotentin) approaches to the north-east corner of Alderney. Still, under certain atmospheric conditions—such, for example, as Wordsworth experienced when he wrote his fine sonnet headed *Near Dover, September, 1802*—the “span of waters”—hardly greater than the Straits of Dover themselves—really seems almost to shrink to the dimensions of “a lake or river bright and fair.” Contrast with this proximity the long stretches of open sea that separate these islands from Weymouth or Southampton, and we begin to realize how, physically at any rate, Jersey is more properly France than England :

Elle est pour nous la France, et, dans son lit des fleurs,
Elle en a le sourire et quelquefois les pleurs.

The impression thus gained is hardly diminished when we quit our lofty watch-tower and descend to the plain. The Channel Islands are doubtless destined in the end to be wholly anglicized, but the process is one of imperceptible transition. A curious French patois, that is really the last relics of the ancient Norman speech, is still the common language of the people. “It is prob-

The “Clameur de Haro”

ably,” says Mr. Bicknell, in his charming *Little Guide*, “the nearest approach now extant to the French spoken at the time of the Norman Conquest by the Normans in England.” French is also the language used commonly in the country churches ; and it is strange to follow the familiar English liturgy rendered thus in a foreign tongue. The Channel Islands, though jealously retaining their ancient independence, and as separate in many respects from England as are Canada and Australia, are yet integrally part of the established English Church. The Reformation freed them from the yoke of Coutances only to subject them to the yoke of Winchester. French, too, or rather Norman, is the curious “Clameur de Haro” that plays so strange a part in the ancient island law. This is the regular machinery, in actions connected with real estate, to maintain the existing *status in quo* till the action can be fought out at length ; and in Jersey is set in motion by the plaintiff himself, whereas in England it is necessary to invoke the Courts of Law. “At the disputed place the aggrieved person, in the presence of two witnesses, orders the aggressor or his agent to desist by exclaiming : ‘Haro ! Haro ! Haro ! A l’aide, mon Prince, on me fait

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tort.' After this he denounces the aggressor by exclaiming: 'Je vous ordonne de quitter cet ouvrage'; upon which, unless he desist instantly, he is liable to be punished for breach of the King's authority, the property being supposed to be under the King's special protection from the moment the 'cry' is made." Afterwards the action is tried; and, of course, if it prove that the complainant has invoked the "haro" wrongly (the word is said by some to be derived from the Frankish "haran," to cry out, or shout; but by others to be a corrupted form of "Ah Rollo"—the first Norman Duke—or "Ah Rou"—Oh my King), he is liable to be fined by the court. It is sometimes said that this strange process was in constant use in Normandy long before the arrival of Rollo and his fierce followers from the North.

French, again, is the architecture of the churches, that in some ways has no parallel in England. French, in many particulars, is the aspect of the towns, whose long rows of white-washed houses, with their never-ending sun-blinds, testify to a warmth and sunlight too conspicuously rare in England. Actually French are many of the faces that one encounters in the streets or on the quays. The Channel Islands of late years





THE CRAGGY ROCKS AND LIGHTHOUSE.

The group of rocks lies N.N.E. of Guernsey, and is passed by the steamers which serve the Channel. It is a dangerous place, and is the scene of many accidents.

Mont Orgueil

have become a favourite touring-ground for summer visitors from France, who so seldom venture to cross the Channel to explore the beauties of England itself. The admirable little *Guides Joanne* now include a volume on the *Iles Anglaises de la Manche*. It is amusing, however, to read in this work that in one respect at least Jersey is still definitely English. “L’observation stricte du dimanche règne à Saint-Hélier comme en Angleterre. La ville déserte, avec ses boutiques fermées, offre un silence sépulchral.” But the closed shops, if not the sepulchral silence, are now becoming common in France itself.

Mont Orgueil, where we stand, is not a bad starting-point from which to commence our exploration of Jersey. Happy, indeed, the visitor who arrives at this little port from France—and the steamer comes from Carteret in little more than an hour. Most English tourists, on the other hand, make Jersey first at St. Helier, which happens to be a town of considerable dulness, and compares very badly with St. Peter Port, in Guernsey. Mont Orgueil, however, may be reached at once from St. Helier by one of the two strange little railways that traverse the south coast of the island. The traveller should quit the

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train at the previous station of Gorey Village, and walk thence across Gorey Common to the Castle. This last, placed bravely on its boss of rugged rock, grows more and more impressive the nearer we approach it. Superb in situation, and unusually picturesque, this "hill of pride" has yet few features of real architectural interest. Parts of it date from about the end of the twelfth century, and the archæologist, of course, will gather "sermons" from every stone of it. But the ordinary sight-seer will be best delighted with the picturesque approach up long flights of steps past successive gateways; with the beautiful views of land and sea to be got from its towers; and, best of all, by the general view of the castle itself, dominating the little harbour that crouches below its walls. The structure is built of a soft-red granite, that is very pleasant to look on, and not least so in spring, when its broken walls are beautifully variegated with a thousand brilliantly orange wallflowers. One is reminded for a moment of the famous verse—

A rose-red city, half as old as time—

which is said to have won the Newdigate prize for Dean Burgon's poem on *Petra*. Nor

Prynne at Mont Orgueil

is Mont Orgueil by any means lacking in tragic "foot-notes" to history. William Prynne had been condemned to lifelong imprisonment by the Star Chamber in 1634, and to lose both his ears in the pillory. Two years previously he had published his *Histrionomastix*, "a volume of over a thousand pages," in which he had upheld, with many ancient and modern instances, the immorality of the drama and of play-acting. Unfortunately, at about this time Henrietta Maria had herself taken part in some private theatricals, and a certain passage in the index, "reflecting on the character of female actors in general, was construed as an aspersion on the Queen." For this, and other offences, he received the savage sentence, which was carried into execution with unrelenting cruelty. At first he was imprisoned in the Tower; but three years later (having in the meanwhile been found guilty of another "seditious libel," and branded on both cheeks) he was removed, first to Carnarvon Castle, and afterwards to Mont Orgueil. With the meeting of the Long Parliament, in 1640, Prynne was immediately set at liberty. In Jersey he had occupied an enforced and tedious leisure by indulging a propensity for verse-making. His *Mount*

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Orgueil, or Divine and Profitable Meditations, was published in 1641; and *A Pleasant Purge for a Roman Catholic* in 1642. "Rhyme," says Mr. C. H. Firth, in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, "is the only poetical characteristic they possess." A line or two may be quoted from *Mount Orgueil* as a sample :

Mount Orgueil Castle is a lofty pile,
Within the Easterne parts of *Jersy Isle*,
Seated upon a *Rocke*, full large and high,
Close by the Sea-shore, next to Normandie.

The poet then goes on to tell us how this stronghold is sometimes assaulted—but assaulted to no purpose—by sea and wind, "two boystrous foes":

For why this fort is built upon a *Rocke*,
And so by Christs owne verdict free from shooke
Of floods and winds; which on it oft may beate,
Yet never fhake it, but themselves defeate.

Less than a decade later and the walls of Mont Orgueil witnessed still blacker tragedy. The quarrel of the Bandinels and the Carterets is an ugly page of history that almost recalls in its unrelenting ferocity some of the worst clan "vendettas" of the Highlands. The trouble began, apparently, with the action of Sir Philip de

The Bandinels and the Carterets

Carteret, when Governor of Jersey, in attempting to deprive David Bandinel—the writer does not know the rights and wrongs of the quarrel—of part of his tithes as Dean of the island. Shortly after this the Civil War began in England, and the Channel Islands were immediately plunged into internecine strife. Philip de Carteret was leader of the Royalists, while Bandinel espoused the cause of the Parliament. The latter at first was triumphant, and Carteret and his wife, Elizabeth, were respectively besieged by the Parliamentary troops, the one in Elizabeth Castle, and the other in Mont Orgueil. Carteret was not quite sixty years old, but the severities of the siege were too great for him. There were wrongs, no doubt, on both sides; but the Puritans seem certainly to have acted on occasion with a surly lack of generosity that goes far to atone for the brutal persecution by the Royalist party of a man like Prynne. In 1644, when Colonel Morris was besieged in Pontefract, we read in the diary of Nathan Drake that “the enemy basely stayed all wine from coming to the Castle for serving of the Communion upon Easter Day, although Forbus (their Governor) had graunted p'tection for the same, and one Browne of Wakefield said

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if it was for our damnation we should have it, but not for our Solvation." Similarly, in Jersey, the Parliamentary Committee, of whom Dean Bandinel was one, refused the dying Sir Philip the last consolations of religion, and even (according to some accounts) the presence of his wife. This, too, after an appeal so piteous as might well have drawn

iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what Love did seek.

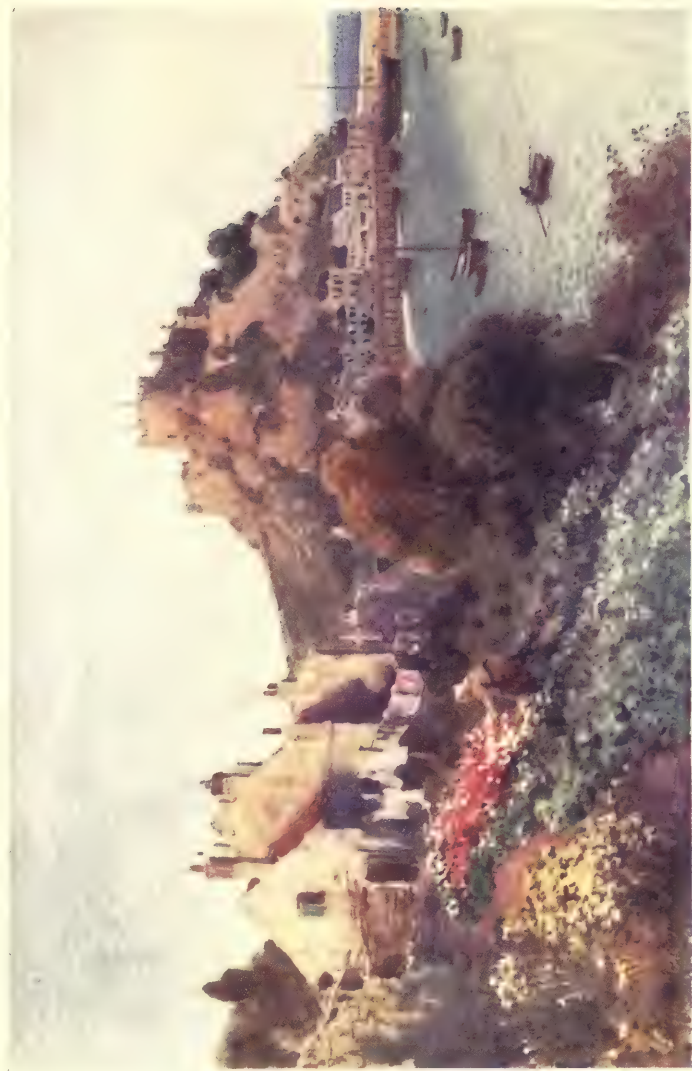
Send me Mr. La Cloche, implored the sick man, "to administer unto me such comforts as are necessary and usual in these extremities, and that you would permitt my poor wife to come unto me, to doe me that last duty, as to close my eyes. The Lord forgive you, as I doe forgive you all." One is glad to read, however, in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, that Lady Carteret was in fact allowed to visit her husband, though almost at his very last gasp. "When the flooring of [St. Ouen's] church was altered 229 years afterwards, the body of Sir Philip enclosed in a leaden shell was uncovered, when it was found by the late Francis Le Maistre to be as white as wax, to have suffered very little decay, and to measure 6 feet 4 inches."

An Attempt at Escape

Presently the "jade Fortune" changed her favours, and the island was recovered for the King by Sir George Carteret, nephew and son-in-law to its former Governor. Dean Bandinel and his son James, the Rector of St. Mary's, were immediately clapped into prison in Mont Orgueil Castle, in the same cell that had formerly been occupied by Prynne. It does not appear that they were treated harshly, but Sir George was a man of cruel severity, and it may well be that they dreaded his further resentment. Anyhow, father and son resolved on a romantic escape. At about three o'clock in the morning, on the stormy night of February 10, 1644, they attempted to lower themselves from the window of their cell by a rope made of knotted napkins, sheets, and pieces of cord. "It is improbable that they had reconnoitred this place in the daytime," says Durell, "for had they been aware of the great elevation, they would never have made the attempt, as long as they were in their senses." Durell wrote in 1837, when the Tour de Mont (completed by Henry Paulet in 1553) was still in existence for the whole of its height. This is said to have been 200 feet high, and the place of imprisonment of the Bandinels was immediately

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under its battlements. The building was supposed to be dangerous, and is now pulled down to its basement. Anyhow, when James Bandinel came to the bottom of the rope—he was the first to venture on the perilous descent—he found it was much too short. He allowed himself to drop on the rocks below, and was seriously hurt by the fall. His father, still less fortunate, was only halfway down, when the flimsy rope parted in two. He was thus dashed to the earth from a much greater height than his son, and was found lying there next morning in a dying condition. The son, after wrapping his insensible old father in his cloak, had attempted to make good his own escape. He was caught, however, a few days later, and conducted back in triumph to his cell. That same day the gates of Mont Orgueil had been opened to allow his father's body to be taken to the grave. David Bandinel was buried in St. Martin's Churchyard, two miles to the north-west of Mont Orgueil by the Faldouet road. I have searched for his grave on the east side of the churchyard, but there seems now to be no memorial, and the hawthorn that once marked it has vanished. It is said, however, to be in close proximity to the tomb-



MOUNT ORGUEIL CASTLE, JERSEY.

The name, meaning "Mount of Pride," is said to have been given to the castle after Sir Reginald de Carteret's successful defence of it against du Guesclin in 1374.

A Rocky Coast

stones of Lucy and Mary Roche Jackson. His wife and son were afterwards laid by his side.

Mont Orgueil was unsuccessfully besieged by the French under the leadership of the Duc de Bourbon and the great Bertrand du Guesclin, Marshal of France (whose splendid tomb may still be seen in the north chapel of St. Laurent, at Le Puy), in 1374. It was in honour of this achievement that it received its present name from Thomas, Duke of Clarence, and brother of Henry V.

Looking southward from Mont Orgueil at low tide it is possible to realize the extraordinary difficulties that attend the navigation of the Jersey seas. The coast from this point to St. Aubin is flat, but as far as eye can see the surface of the water is a vast archipelago of broken rocks and reefs. Still farther out to sea is the hardly submerged plateau of the Minquiers, with here and there a point that just lifts above high water. There is a second stretch of low sandy coast on the west of the island, at St. Ouen's Bay, guarded in its turn by a second reef of rocks. Nor do these exhaust the possibilities of coming to ruin on this iron coast. It is not without reason that the steam-packets from

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England run in the daytime only in summer, when the long light evenings give every opportunity of picking their way through the narrow passages. The fate of the *Stella* (on the afternoon of Maunday Thursday, 1899), somewhere in the neighbourhood of the terrible Casquets, is still too vivid in men's memories to need re-telling. The exact point of striking is unknown. The *Stella* settled down in the afternoon mist, and no man has ever traced her, or identified her grave in "the vast and wandering" main.

Most that is best in Jersey is identified with its coast, except, perhaps, for the archæologist, who will want to push a little inland, to investigate the ancient churches of St. Mary, St. Lawrence, and St. Peter. Inland, too, is the Prince's Tower, built on the Hougue-Hambye in the eighteenth century. The mound is associated with a serpent legend, that perhaps has points of contact with the well-known stories of the Sockburn and Laidley "worms." The old chapel that adjoins it was remodelled by Richard Mabon, Dean of Jersey, in 1525. He had returned from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and constructed an imitation of the Holy Sepulchre; just as Opice Adornes, a hundred

An Unusual Font

years earlier, had erected the Church of Jerusalem at Bruges. Preserved in this now-deserted chapel is a font for the exact parallel of which we shall look in vain in England, though analogous cases occur in our country, and some precisely similar instances may be found in France. Attached to the inside of the bowl is a smaller bowl, which was probably meant to catch the drippings of the consecrated water that ran off the baby's head. This is the ceremony demanded in terms by the *Rituale Romanum*, as cited in Mr. F. Bond's beautiful book on Fonts (p. 60): "Ne aqua ex infantis capite in fontem, sed vel in sacrarium baptisterii prope ipsum fontem exstructum defluat, aut in aliquo vase ad hunc usum parato recepta, in ipsius baptisterii vel in ecclesiæ sacrarium effundatur." Modern Roman Catholic fonts are now often constructed in two separate partitions, and this is said to be the origin of the plural *fonts baptismaux*, of such constant occurrence in France.

Most of the interest of Jersey, however, except its fields of giant cabbage-stalks, and its green lanes of quaint little pollarded trees, will probably be found on the sea-coast, or near it. Let us, from Mont Orgueil, set our faces to the west,

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calling, on our way towards modern St. Helier, at the two ancient parish churches of Grouville and St. Clement's. In Grouville churchyard are buried seven soldiers who fell in a skirmish with a detachment of the French who had been left behind by Rullecourt, when he landed on this spot and advanced on St. Helier on January 6, 1781. Grouville church itself has little interest. Like other churches in the island, it is built of granite, and has windows with good Flamboyant tracery, except where this last has been cut away for the insertion of ugly "church-warden" sashes. It possesses, however, in the south wall of the south chapel, a very curious feature, the object of which is obscure. This is a niche on the level of the floor, with a late segmental head, and with what seems a broken cavity in the lower part at the back. I do not know whether this was once used as an oven for baking the sacramental wafer, such as those that are sometimes thought to have been found in the Surrey churches of Limpsfield, Nutfield, and Dunsfold. St. Clement's, a mile to the south, and lying off the direct road to St. Helier, should be visited for the sake of its ancient wall-paintings. One of these exhibits St. Michael; another St. Margaret of Antioch,

“Trois Vifs ” et “Trois Morts ”

emerging from the body of the dragon, who had vainly tried to swallow her; and another St. Barbara of Heliopolis, standing near her tower. Still more interesting are the scanty relics of the “Trois Vifs” and the “Trois Morts”—the legend of the three Kings, who, when hunting in the forest, were suddenly confronted by three open graves, or by three hideous skeletons. The classical instance of this morality is in the Campo Santo at Pisa; and there is another fine example, in a kind of vestry, on the south side of the great abbey-church of St. Riquier, near Abbeville. It was altogether rather a favourite subject with medieval, religious artists, not less than twenty-three examples being recorded in England by Mr. Keyser, as well as one at Ste. Marie du Chastel, in Guernsey. It must not be confounded with the parallel “Dance of Death,” of which there are only five recorded instances, in addition to the one at old St. Paul’s. There is still a grand example of this last on the back of the north choir stalls, in the strange old abbey-church of La Chaise Dieu, in Central France.

St. Helier, we have hinted, is a somewhat tedious town; by which we mean only that the place contains few objects of special interest, and

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is a trifle too large and urban for so very small an island. No doubt some of its aspects are agreeable enough. The parish church is a restored building of small architectural interest, but contains the grave of the gallant Major Pierson, who fell in Jersey, in 1781, in the conflict with the French in the Royal Square. His adversary, Rullecourt, who also perished, is buried on the north of the churchyard. Rullecourt landed to the east of St. Helier during the night of January 5, and took the town by a sudden assault. The Governor, Major Moses Corbet, was captured in his bed; and was forced to sign a capitulation, as well as an order to Major Pierson to surrender the troops in his charge. Pierson, however, charged the enemy in the Royal Square, where they had barricaded themselves, and fell at the first assault. Undeterred by the loss of their leader, the Jersey soldiers and militia-men continued fighting, and cleared the French from the town. St. Helier possesses yet other claims to historical distinction, in the mystery of James de la Cloche. This last was the eldest illegitimate son of Charles II., and is known to have been a Jerseyman. His story has recently attracted much attention; and Mr. Andrew Lang, in his

Mystery of James de la Cloche

Valet's Tragedy, once even went so far as to suggest that de la Cloche was "The Man with the Iron Mask." This theory he afterwards abandoned; but it is still stoutly maintained by Miss Edith Carey in her beautiful volume on the Channel Islands. It is remarkable, indeed, that James de la Cloche disappears finally from history after November 16, 1668, whilst "The Man with the Iron Mask" makes his first appearance on the scene on July 19, 1669. De la Cloche may also, when in London, have easily learned secrets from his father, as to Romish plots, that imperilled the crown of Charles II., and may well have caused anxiety to Louis XIV. "Doubts," says Miss Carey, "may be cast on a theory which involves an apparently affectionate father consigning his son to a living tomb, and a King of France spending money and trouble to keep a King of England's secret. But in reply it must be urged that Charles's conduct is consistent with all we read in history respecting his cowardly selfishness. In reply to complaints made to him of Lauderdale's cruelty in Scotland, he said: 'I perceive that Lauderdale has been guilty of many bad things against the people of Scotland, but I cannot find out that he has acted against my interests.'"

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Charles' headquarters, when a boy in Jersey, were in Elizabeth Castle, whither he was sent by his father for greater safety in 1646. Later in the same year he left for Fontainebleau, but returned to the Channel Islands in September, 1649. In the meanwhile the elder Charles had perished on the scaffold at Whitehall; and Jersey, unlike Guernsey, still loyalist to the core, was one of the few places—Pontefract Castle, in Yorkshire, was another—where his son was immediately proclaimed as King, on February 17, 1649. Elizabeth Castle itself is another of those picturesque places of semi-insulation that are not uncommon among historical sites—Holy Island, and the two Mounts St. Michael, are other famous examples. At time of low water it is picturesquely approached by a rough and rocky causeway across the sands; but the building itself has been greatly altered, and presents very little archæological interest.

From St. Helier westward, round the half-moon curve of St. Aubin Bay, past West Park, Millbrook, and Beaumont, is now largely a crescent of continuous houses. St. Aubin's itself is a picturesque little watering-place, with far greater natural advantages than its bigger neigh-





LA CORBIERE LIGHTHOUSE, JERSEY.

The white tower stands at the extremity of a particularly dangerous reef.

St. Brelade's Bay

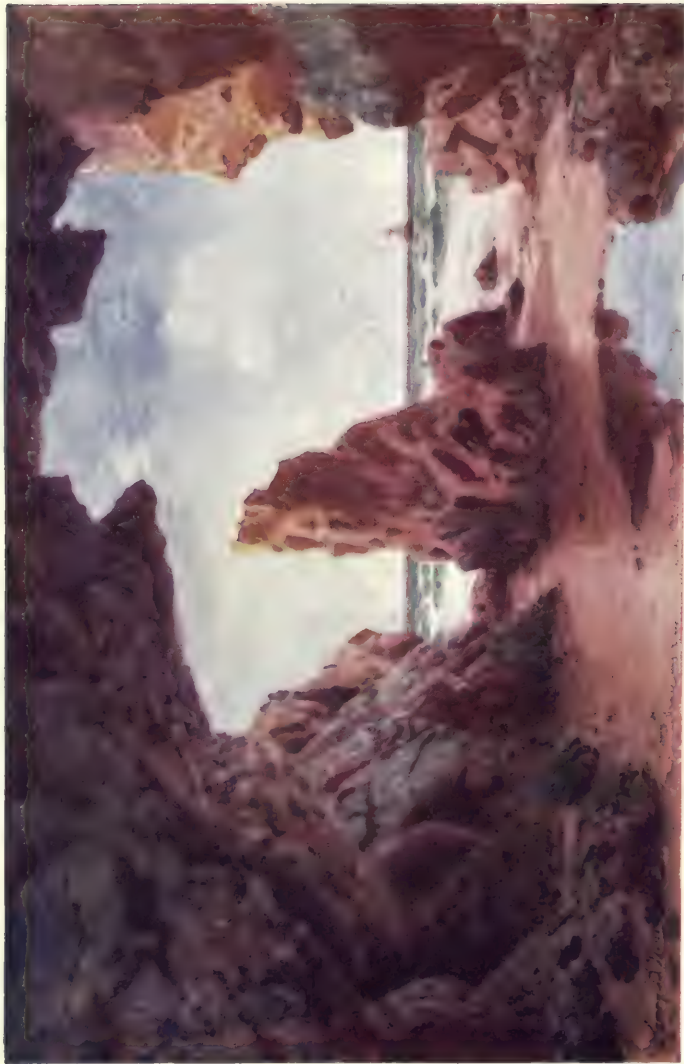
bour. Immediately to the south of the town begins at once the fine, red line of granite cliffs, which, turning definitely westward at Noirmont Point, continues, past Portelet and St. Brelade's Bays, to the south-west corner of the island at Corbière Point. Portelet Bay is a charming recess, with the rocky little Ile au Guerdain in its centre. On the summit of this last is Janvrin's Tower. It is said that Philippe Janvrin, returning home from Nantes, then desolated with plague, was forced to undergo quarantine in this bay in 1721; and that here the poor wretch died within actual sight of home, but without ever exchanging a word with his wife and children. He was buried at first in the Ile au Guerdain, but afterwards removed to St. Brelade's churchyard.

St. Brelade's Bay, nearly two miles across, if we measure from Le Fret to La Moye Point, is perhaps the most gracious on the Jersey coast. The church has a very picturesque outline, with a saddle-backed tower like that of St. Sampson's, in Guernsey. It was admirably restored a few years ago, when the plaster was stripped from the vaulted roof that is common to most old churches in the Channel Islands, and is probably analogous

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to the vaulted roofs of the fortified churches of Pembrokeshire. Mr. Bicknell, however, is wrong in saying that "the interior walls . . . look very dignified in their original condition." Nothing is more certain than that medieval churches—at any rate in cases where the walls are of rubble masonry—were plastered, and commonly covered with wall-paintings. Such plastering and old wall-painting may still be found at St. Brelade's in the Chapelle ès Pêcheurs, or Fishermen's Chapel, that remains in the parish churchyard. These, according to Mr. Keyser, represent parts of two Doms or Final Judgments, Our Lord before Herod, an Annunciation, the Assumption of the Virgin, and the Offering of the Magi. They probably date from the fifteenth century, and the attendant makes them visible by the simple expedient of throwing the light on them with a mirror. The existence of this old chapel side by side with the parish church—the same thing seems formerly to have happened at Grouville—is a subject of curious inquiry. Chantry chapels were sometimes built in churchyards—there is still a fourteenth-century example at Carew, in Pembrokeshire, and there was formerly one at Newdigate, in Surrey—but these would





THE NEEDLE ROCK, GRIFFIN TACON, JERSEY.

Other Antiquities

be generally of later date ; whereas the Fishermen's Chapel is supposed to date from quite the beginning of the twelfth century. In the grounds of the St. Brelade's Hotel is an ancient cross of the kind that is stated by Mr. Bicknell formerly to have " stood at nearly every place where four cross roads met in the island."

The walk across the south coast of Jersey, from Mont Orgueil to the Corbière, taking the train for the four dull miles, where there is nothing to see, between St. Helier and St. Aubin, will probably almost exhaust, except for the archæologist of the Dry-as-Dust school, the artificial attractions of the island of Jersey. Of course, there are other antiquities to see : St. Ouen's Manor, for example, now recently restored, and the ancient house of the Carterets ; the cromlechs at Gorey and the Coupéron ; and the seven old churches that we have not yet visited. But when we have seen the wall-paintings at St. Brelade's and St. Clement's ; have inspected Elizabeth Castle, and the curious font at Prince's Tower ; and, above all, have made every stick and stone of Mont Orgueil our own treasured possession, it will be time for most of us to turn our attention, less to the artificial attractions of Jersey, than to its

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wonderful natural beauties. It is lucky that these lie mostly on the north coast, which is well out of reach of St. Helier. It would be sad indeed if this silent succession of bays, stretching in stern sublimity from Grosnez Point to the long useless breakwater on the south of Fliquet Bay, were infested with tea-gardens, and boarding-houses, and villas. For this twelve miles of coast is both wholly unspoilt, and one of the loveliest imaginable. Brakes, no doubt, in the season, with their hordes of jolly trippers, invade for a few hours the sacred silences of Grève de Lecq and Rozel Bay. These, however, are limited to definite times and places; nor will it be hard for the quiet lover of Nature to evade their unwelcome gaieties. Every inch of this glorious stretch of coast should be walked over, if possible; should often be revisited; and should be lingered over lovingly. Where else have these rose-red cliffs a counterpart, jutting out into the bluest, or most emerald, of seas, and haunted by myriads of clanging sea-fowl, unless it be on the borders of lost Lyonesse? Waters that rest on a granite bed are always of amazing translucency—

Pleased to watch the waters sleep,
Round Iona green and deep—

The North Coast of Jersey

and those that never rest round the igneous cliffs of Jersey are no exception to this beautiful rule. Here and there, of course, the explorer will come across some special point of interest, though the coast, to be enjoyed at its best, must always be enjoyed as a whole. At Grève de Lecq is a cave to visit which thoroughly entails some very rough scrambling, and some rather giddy climbing up an almost vertical cliff. Less than two miles to the east, as the crow flies—it adds to the distance enormously to follow all the sinuosities of this deeply indented coast—is the Creux-du-Vis, or Devil's Hole — one of those strange, roofless caverns, connecting with the sea by a tunnel through which the tide ebbs and flows, but set back some little distance from the margin of the cliff, that are found again in Sark, in the Creux Derrible and Pot. In many respects they resemble the famous “pot-holes” that occur in the mountain limestone of the Craven district in North-West Yorkshire, though their origin, it is clear, is wholly different. Creux, of course, is connected with the French *creuser*, to dig; and “derrible,” which has nothing whatever to do with “terrible,” is an old Norman word, unknown to modern French, that really expresses the same

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idea : “Cavité d’un rocher formée par un éboulement de terre, attenant à un précipice.” “Creux” is used again of artificial cromlechs. East of the Creux-du-Vis is the Mouriers Waterfall, where a little stream leaps down the rocks into the sea. The path along the cliff is rather giddy, and those who take it must remember that a slip may be followed by fatal consequences, like the accident that happened to Mrs. Guille, in 1871, at the Gouffre, in Guernsey. The steep grass slopes in spring are plentifully sprinkled with the dainty yellow blossoms of the little wild narcissus. Beyond Sorel Point comes suddenly the deep hollow of La Houle, guarded by granite cliffs of sheer sublimity; and beyond this, in long succession, round innumerable intervening points, come Mourier, and Bonne Nuit, and Giffard, and Bouley, and Rozel, and Fliquet Bays. A week may well be spent, and more than a week, in leisurely exploration of this gloriously broken coast. Or the visitor who has less energy, or is weary of much scrambling, may sit here day after day in the sunshine, on promontory or cliff, watching the “blind wave” at its never-ending business of “feeling round its ocean hall.” There are less pleasant ways than this of spending a



THE PEA STACKS (TAS DE POIS), JERSEY, GUERNSEY.

Isolated and wall-sided masses of rock of this type are typical of the Channel Islands.

The North Coast of Jersey

summer holiday for those whose brains are fagged by weeks of dull work in London. And always across the water, far-seen on the dim horizon, are the faint grey lines of the Cotentin, and the cliffs of fairy-like Sark.

CHAPTER II

GUERNSEY

JERSEY, with larger acreage and a bigger population, is content to form a kingdom by itself; Guernsey is fain to ally itself with its immediate neighbour, Sark, and even seek bonds of union with Alderney, twenty miles away. The diversity maintained jealously in these little islands, which an Englishman is too hastily accustomed to regard in a lump, is complex and even amusing. Just a few trivial details must suffice. In Guernsey the toad is altogether unknown, except for some few stuffed specimens in the Guille-Allès Museum; whereas Jersey exhibits an exaggerated species that is supposed to be quite peculiar to itself. The mole, again, though common in Jersey and Alderney, is unknown in Guernsey, though the last has a field-vole of its own. Guernsey, in fact, is supposed to have become an island at least 14,000 years ago, whilst Jersey was torn asunder



MOULIN HUET, GUERNSEY.

A particularly attractive bay on the southern side of the island.

An Island Under Glass

from France not more than 3,000 years before Christ. Guernsey thus received only the Continental fauna that flourished at the period of its final insulation. All the islands, like Iceland, are exempt from poisonous snakes. In domestic animals, again, the distinction is strongly marked. Jersey has a picturesque cow of its own, mottled white and yellow, placid, and rather big. Guernsey, on the other hand, has a smaller breed of cattle, much more wiry in movement, and a kind of tawny red. Beasts from Guernsey and Alderney are allowed to inter-breed, but the Jersey cattle are looked on as undesirable aliens, and sternly prohibited from the sister State. In all three instances the cattle are tethered when at pasture, as happens also in some parts of France. The animal, thus driven to forage in a circle, perhaps crops the ground more closely than when free to range at will.

Guernsey, whatever were its merits half-a-hundred years ago, will now, perhaps, be found the dullest of the Channel Islands. Owing to the frenzy for intensive cultivation, the inland parts of the island are now literally covered with glass. Acre after acre of ugly rows of hot-houses have displaced over most of the interior

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what once were pleasant fields. Attached to each such settlement is an ugly concrete house, and each has a skeleton iron windmill, for pumping up water, that completes the repellent aspect of the scene. The writer has travelled over most of the island on foot to explore its twelve old churches, and investigate its coast. Frankly, he is driven to put on record that he found it a dismal task. Features, of course, remain of interest and beauty, if one is willing to walk about in blinkers, and seldom raise one's eyes above the ground. The old, granite-built farm-houses, standing back, as a rule, but a little from the road, are uncommon, and extremely picturesque. Inland Guernsey, again, possesses one single glory that is almost unknown in Jersey. Everywhere in the island, commencing even with the very suburbs of St. Peter Port itself, the low, green, sod walls that divide the little fields are covered with millions of saffron primroses. Such a wealth of primroses I have never seen elsewhere—not even in the remotest lanes of the Surrey or Sussex Wealds. How the primrose has survived in such excessive fertility, with so huge a population, and with such bitter cultivation, is a problem easily stated, but not very

St. Peter Port

easily solved. Whether it is likely long to survive is a question one fears to ask. In Sark, again, the primrose—though here it is no marvel—carpets the ground like daisies on a “wet bird-haunted English lawn”; like daisies, too, in Switzerland, the stalks of the Sark primrose grow to remarkable length. But as soon as we cross to Jersey—and when the writer noted this strong contrast, he crossed directly from Guernsey to Jersey, and almost directly from Jersey to Sark—the primrose is seen no more by thousands in the hedge-side. The only spot where I have noticed it growing in profusion in the larger island was on the prehistoric “hougue” at Prince’s Tower.

Guernsey, however, though thus irritatingly spoilt in its interior—for the visitor comes to see beautiful scenery, and not to assist at a horticultural triumph—still possesses in its south coast a feature of distinction that neither recklessness nor greed of money has so far been able to spoil. It also possesses in St. Peter Port a capital so pleasant, and withal so picturesque, that it makes one desiderate all the more keenly the beautiful environment in which it was once set. Approaching this port in the early morning light,

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the colour and grouping of the little town seem almost fantastically correct. Surely this more resembles an imaginary sketch than a city actually realized in this commonplace, workaday world. St. Peter's Church, in the middle of the picture, has just the required outline, and is set in just the right place. The tall, brown houses behind it, with their mellow red roofs, are of just the right colour, and in just the right number. The new church of St. Barnabas is just rightly designed, and is built just exactly where it ought to be built. And lastly, the wooded amphitheatre behind all, with its sprinkling of white villas, is just neither more nor less than such a background ought to be. A composition like this on the drop-scene of a theatre would scarcely surprise us, but here we rub our eyes. We land; and the cheerful anticipation of the sea-view is hardly hurt at all by contact with actual fact. A pleasanter little town than this, or more full of bustling happiness, is not readily conceived. Darker aspects no doubt are there, but they do not obtrude on the casual view.

Castle Cornet, immediately on our left as we approach the harbour, holds much the same position to St. Peter Port as Elizabeth Castle

The Parish Church

holds to St. Helier. Castle Cornet, indeed, is connected with the mainland by a causeway; but as a building it is equally uninteresting. In fact, the only object of antiquarian interest in St. Peter Port is the old parish church, so conspicuous on the quay. This has a central tower, with a good leaded spire, that is luckily not twisted like the leaded spire at Chesterfield. At the side is a small cote for the sanctus bell, exactly as at Barnstaple, in Devonshire. More frequently these cotes were placed on the east gable of the nave, whilst at Oxenton, in Gloucestershire, the sanctus bell swings to the present day in a curious little opening high up on the south face of the fifteenth-century tower. It is possible, too, or even probable, that the curious "low-side" windows—once absurdly called "leper windows"—which generally occur, when they occur at all, towards the south-west corner of the chancel, were used to enable the sanctus bell to be rung through their opening by hand. On the ringing of this bell the passer-by would bow his head in reverential awe, just as the peasants in Millet's picture bow their heads at the ringing of the Angelus. Inside, the chief feature of St. Peter's Church is the strangeness of

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the nave arcades, the arches of which spring from piers that are only two or three feet high. Notice also the Flamboyant tracery of the windows, so typical of the Channel Islands, and the very striking piscina in the south aisle of the choir.

Historically the chief interest of Guernsey is comparatively recent, and centres round the residence here of Victor Hugo. After the *Coup d'État* Hugo settled first in Jersey, where he occupied a house in Marine Terrace. But the English Government, which maintained friendly relations with the new French Imperialism, pleased him little better than that of his native land. His conduct, indeed, was as wantonly tactless as that of an earlier fellow-poet. If Shelley flaunted his tract on the *Necessity of Atheism* in the face of grave clerical dons at Oxford, Hugo and his comrades were equally reckless when they imagined that *la justice* or *la vérité* were wronged. "Encore un pas," cried this enthusiast bravely, "et l'Angleterre sera une annexe de l'Empire français, et Jersey un canton de l'arrondissement de Coutances." The occasion of this outbreak was the banishment of three of his compatriots from the island in 1855. "Et maintenant," thundered the poet in retort, "expulsez

Victor Hugo's House

nous." "Whether he intended it or not, he was taken at his word. The protest was written on October 17, 1855, and Friday, November 2, 1855, saw the expulsion of the whole band, 33, who had signed the defiant document." Hugo at once removed to St. Peter Port, and established himself there in Hauteville House. Here he resided from 1855 to 1870, when Sedan rendered possible his return to France, and the house still belongs to his family. To the Guernsey visitor it is now a place of pious pilgrimage, not less than that other old house, in Paris, in the charming Place des Vosges. Much of the furniture and fittings remains almost exactly as he left them fifty years ago, and much is of real historic interest. Thus a table in the Red Dining-room once belonged to Charles II. of England; whilst a fire-screen was worked by Madame Pompadour, and some bead-work belonged to Queen Christina of Sweden. From the upper windows it is possible to enjoy the same lovely view towards Sark, with Jethou and Herm in the middle distance, that is got from all the upper parts of St. Peter Port—as, for instance, from the grounds of the Priaulx Library, or from the gardens of the Old Government House Hotel.

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It is pleasanter to picture Victor Hugo at Guernsey, writing here his novel, *Les Travailleurs de la Mer*—the scene of which is laid at Torteval, in the extreme south-west corner of the island—and always looking longingly towards the invisible shores of France, than to dwell on certain other episodes in the history of the island, which, however disagreeable, cannot lightly be put aside. The tale of Bailiff Gaultier de la Salle, though wholly misconceived, will not quickly be displaced from its niche in island tradition. He is said to have resided in the Ville au Roi, though it is hardly likely that the house now pointed out as his is really as old as the fourteenth century. A neighbour called Massey had an easement to draw water which took him in front of the Bailiff's windows. Annoyed at this invasion of his treasured privacy, Gaultier laid a trap to get rid of the intruder. Doubtless he had read the old history of Joseph, and of the silver cup that was hidden in the corn-sack of Benjamin. But Gaultier's intention was far less kindly, and he concealed the two silver cups in Massey's wheat-rick in order that Massey might be accused of their theft. Here is some deep confusion in the story, for we should naturally have expected that

Bailiff Gaultier de la Salle

the discovery of the wine-cups would be made the machinery for fixing the crime on the victim. Why else should the cups be hidden in Massey's wheat-rick, when they might easily have been hidden in some much surer place? Anyhow, the Bailiff, suborning perjured evidence, fixed so black a case on Massey that the Judge pronounced sentence of death. Then, at the last moment, there burst into the court-house a witness who had found the cups that very morning in taking down the rick. Whatever evidence had procured the condemnation of Massey might well have seemed quadrupled by this new and damning fact. But the inconsistent story makes the Bailiff exclaim in anger: "Thou wretch, did I not tell thee not to touch that rick?" Convicted thus by the words of his own mouth, the Bailiff was sent to the self-same death as he had schemed for a fellow-citizen. The place of his execution—an oblong recess in the wall, not unlike those in which road-makers break stones—is still pointed out at the "Friquet-au-Gibet"; and a rudely-scratched cross on the pavement near at hand indicates the spot where the criminal received his last Communion on the way to the gallows. Miss Edith Carey styles this story "pure

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invention," and thinks that it "is probably derived from a confused recollection of the doings and motives of the rival 'wicked Bailiff' of Jersey, Hoste Nicolle." There was really, however, as Miss Carey establishes, a Gaultier (Walter) de la Salle, who was condemned to death in 1320 for having assisted in imprisoning a certain Ranulph Gaultier in Castle Cornet, "and there wickedly killing him by various tortures."

Another dark picture, and unhappily more authentic, is the burning, with attendant circumstances of extraordinary brutality, of three poor heretic women, by order of Dean Amy and Bailiff Helier Gosselin, on July 18, 1556. The mother, Katherine Cauches, was tied to a stake in the middle, with a married daughter on either hand—Guillemine Gilbert and Perotine Massey. An attempt was made to strangle them before the faggots were lighted—a merciful privilege that was also extended to women in executions for "petty treason"—but one of them, at least, fell alive into the fire. This poor wretch, Perotine Massey, the wife of a Protestant pastor, was delivered of a baby in the middle of the flames. The child was rescued from the burning by a man called House, but cast back again by order





HERM AND JETHOU FROM GUERNSEY

These two little islands add greatly to the picturesqueness of the scenery of the eastern shores of Guernsey.

St. Sampson's and Vale Castle

of the Bailiff. This repulsive incident is preserved by Foxe, and is interwoven by Tennyson in *Queen Mary* :

Sir, in Guernsey,
I watch'd a woman burn ; and in her agony,
The mother came upon her—a child was born—
And, sir, they hurl'd it back into the fire.

St. Peter Port is an admirable centre from which to visit every quarter of the compact little island ; but, indeed, as already adumbrated, there is but little in Guernsey (except for the antiquarian) that is really worth seeing outside its capital, except the south coast. St. Sampson's may be visited for its picturesque church, which is one of the oldest and most interesting on the island. The road by which we gain it is so ugly—one continued line of houses—that no one need hesitate to use the electric tram, which was one of the earliest of its kind in the British dominions. It is hardly worth while to get out on the way to visit the poor remains of Ivy Castle : the situation of the ruins is unusually unpicturesque, and the ruins themselves are uninteresting. Opposite St. Sampson's itself, across the busy little harbour, is the rather better ruin of Vale Castle. This would be exceedingly pleasant to look on, were it not for

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the mammoth granite-quarries that pave the streets of Westminster, but effectually disfigure what were once the charms of Guernsey. The Castle itself, like Ivy Castle, is little more than a shell ; in fact, the latter has the additional credit of what is possibly a chapel, with a rudely vaulted stone roof. Ivy Castle, moreover, boasts at least authentic pedigree, having first been built—if the date be really right—by Robert, Duke of Normandy, before the Norman Conquest ; whereas of the origin of Vale Castle practically nothing is known. Its ancient title, *Le Château de St. Michel l'Archange*, is perhaps responsible for the tradition that it was built by monks from Mont St. Michel as a place of protection for the neighbouring priory in case of a sudden invasion. From Vale Castle, if we like, we may cross the island—here less than a couple of miles broad—to Vale Church, built on the edge of what was once a sea-creek, but has long since silted up, or been reclaimed. It is pleasanter, however, to follow round the coast, past Bordeaux Harbour, and across breezy *L'Ancrese Common*, especially as this takes us past the *L'Autel de Déhus*, and the *L'Autel des Vardes*, the two finest remaining dolmens in the Channel Islands.

Guernsey Cromlechs

The finest of all is supposed to have been that which was discovered behind St. Helier in 1785, and which was "unanimously voted" to the then Governor, Marshal Conway, "in a moment of enthusiasm." The Marshal, unfortunately, in another moment of enthusiasm, carried it off and re-erected it at his country seat in Berkshire. These Channel Island dolmens are of wholly different type from the familiar cromlechs of the mushroom pattern of Kits Coty House, near Aylesford, or of Pentre Evan, in Pembrokeshire. They are, in fact, considerable, stone-built, subterranean burial-chambers, with traces in some instances of a long succession of interments. The islanders call them "pouquelayes"; which is derived by Miss Carey from either the Celtic *pwca*, a fairy, and *lies*, a place, or from *pouq*, an excavation, and *lekh*, a stone. In this connection it is interesting that they are supposed to be haunted by fairies—one is called the Creux des Fées, and another the Roche à la Fée—who are supposed to "bring ill-luck on those who interfere with them, a fact which has saved many of them from the spoiler." "The restorer, however," adds Mr. Bicknell dryly, "has unfortunately not been idle, and the Little People do

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not appear to have found a punishment to 'fit the crime' in this case." Unhappily the same must be admitted in the case of the navvies employed on the harbour works in Alderney, who "amused themselves by smashing up all the megaliths that they could lay their hands on." Many of the relics from these cist-vaens—bones and pottery—have found their way into the Lukis Museum at St. Peter Port.

Vale church itself, not far from the Grand Havre, and in a flat, unlovely neighbourhood, is possibly the most interesting, architecturally, in the island. The chancel arch should be noticed, with its chevron ornament; the chancel, vaulted in two compartments (in contrast with the rude, pointed vaults of most of the other churches); the piscina in the aisle; and the wall arcade. Another striking feature is the brackets for images on the columns of the arcade, between the nave and its aisle. A series like this is uncommon; though there is a group of churches in West Yorkshire—sometimes supposed to have been built by the Tempest family—Kirkby Malham is the finest—which has traces of canopied niches in the same position. The finest single niche that the writer knows of this kind is on the south



A FIELD OF CHRYSANTHEMUMS IN GIVERNY.

The climate encourages the growing of flowers, and the northern half of the island is mostly devoted to this industry.

The South Coast of Guernsey

side of the nave in the fine, fifteenth-century church of Lechlade, in Gloucestershire. Towards the west end of the churchyard is another tumble-down dolmen. Thus Christians of the twentieth century are buried in the same soil that received the bones of their neolithic ancestors no one knows how many thousands of years ago.

Though Vale is not uninteresting, it is with a feeling of relief that one turns one's back on this north corner of the island that once perhaps was so beautiful, but is now so hopelessly spoilt. The glory of Guernsey, as already stated, is now wholly confined to its south coast. Moulin Huet is a gracious bay, too well known from photographs to need further description; whilst the little Saints Bay to the west of it—a shrine within a shrine—is almost equally charming. Westward from Icart Point, itself a splendid promontory, the coast sweeps round in another great curve to La Moye Point; beyond which, again, to Pleinmont, at the south-west corner of the island, the cliffs, though everywhere deeply indented, continue, on the whole, a more uniform direction. The great hollow between Icart and La Moye Points is apparently nameless, unless it be Icart Bay. There is no authoritative Ordnance

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map of the Channel Islands, to which one might adhere whether right or wrong; and the best map of Guernsey with which I am acquainted, in the late Mr. C. B. Black's guide-book, gives the name Icart to the eastern recess of the great main bay, and Petit Bot and Portelet to the two small recesses to the west of it. Anyhow, Petit Bot is the most secret and intimate of the three, and entirely picturesque with its disused mill and martello tower. This is one of the points on the coast to which the chars-à-bancs descend from St. Peter Port; and the drive down the glen by which we approach it is delightful. The next calling point is Le Gouffre, just beyond La Moye Point, which here runs out into the sea in long ribs of warm red granite. Here the cars generally halt for a couple of hours, whilst the tripper feasts on lobster in the pleasant little inn. The Gouffre may be taken as roughly the centre of the grand seven miles of cliff line of this splendid south coast. The section hence to the west is less frequently explored, though the picturesque cave of the Creux Mahie, again roughly half-way, is often paid a visit, and is well worth visiting. Pleinmont and Torteval come into the "Toilers of the Deep"; and this corner of the





THE COUFFE, SARK.

A romantic and almost terrifying pathway among the precipitous rocks of the island.

The Chapel of St. Apolline

island, the farthest of all from St. Peter Port, is luckily less injured than the rest. The north-west coast of Guernsey, from Pleinmont Point to Vale, past the huge sweeping hollows—some of them singularly symmetrical—of Rocquaine, Perelle, Vazon, and Cobo Bays, is chiefly a matter of rocky beach and of slight elevations shelving down in gentle declivity to the sea. The glass-houses, moreover, which have languished much at Torteval, flourish again in amazing vigour as we draw near Cobo Bay. There are two points of interest, however, in this corner of the island that justify even the dull, direct journey by which we approach them from St. Peter Port. The first of these is the little Chapel of St. Apolline, which is stated in all the guide-books, on documentary evidence, to have been founded by Nicolas Henry in 1394, or thereabouts. Even documentary evidence, in architectural matters, is not always to be trusted. Only the day before writing these lines the writer was re-visiting the Lady Chapel at St. Albans Cathedral, which is said to have been built—again on documentary evidence—*circa* 1310; though the Inventory lately published by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments adds cautiously: “The tracery of

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these windows . . . is very advanced in character for the date." The tracery, indeed, is so advanced, if the date be really right, as hopelessly to confuse all previously held notions as to the systematic evolution of English architecture. That the building was at any rate finished by this date is altogether incredible. I notice that the late Lord Grimthorpe, in his pugnacious little handbook, after setting out the evidence from the Abbey Records, adds significantly, "but the style of the windows suggests a much later date." And the case is much the same with this Chapel of St. Apolline. On October 13, 1392, Nicolas Henry received permission from the monastery of Mont St. Michel, in Normandy, to alienate certain fields to provide an endowment for the Chapel of Notre Dame de la Perelle, *which he had recently erected*; and in an Act of the Royal Court, dated June 6, 1452, we come across the phrase, "La Chapelle de Notre Dame de la Perelle appellée la Chapelle Sainte Apolline." Certainly the identification seems complete. On the other hand, the writer believes that no one visiting this chapel who has previously read Professor Baldwin Brown's beautiful volume on Saxon Architecture—and it so happened that the

The Island of Lihou

writer paid his first visit to the Channel Islands almost immediately after its perusal—can fail to detect in this building quite a number of *criteria* that are there set out as indicating, at any rate in England, a pre-Conquest era of building. Unfortunately I have kept no note of these features, but the impression then made on my mind is vivid. I may, of course, be wrong; but it seems to me at least possible that we have here the solitary survivor—far older than the Fishermen's Chapel at St. Brelade's in Jersey—of those many chapels that are known to have been built in the Channel Islands in the eighth and ninth centuries by the successors of St. Magloire.

The other point of interest in the neighbourhood of L'Erée is the rocky islet of Lihou, approached by a causeway across the sands, or more properly the rocks, but only at low tide. Here are the scanty fragments of the Priory and Chapel of Notre Dame de la Roche, apparently a cell to the monastery of Mont St. Michel, which seems to have had so much to do with the spiritual matters of the Channel Islands. The tide at St. Michael's Mount is said to rush up across the level sands more quickly than the fleetest horse can gallop, and visitors to Lihou

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will be well advised to remember that here again its onset is unexpected and swift. At L'Erée village is another dolmen, the Creux des Fées, to which passing allusion has already been made. St. Peter's Church in this neighbourhood—in full, St. Pierre du Bois—is perhaps the handsomest, though not necessarily the most interesting, of all the twelve churches in the island, and exhibits some Flamboyant work of a very pleasing character.

CHAPTER III

ALDERNEY, SARK, AND THE LESSER ISLANDS

HITHERTO, in dealing with the two larger of the Channel Islands, we have found their claims to natural beauty in their coasts. The interior of Jersey is no doubt pleasant, with its lush-green valleys running north and south, with its quiet little villages, and with its never-ending potato-fields. The interior of Guernsey, on the other hand, is frankly hideous, save here and there a cottage, or a picturesque old farm, hidden in the folding of some safely secluded dell. But in both cases alike the real distinction of the island is limited to cliffs that for warmth of colour and strangeness of contortion can surely be paralleled in Cornwall alone. Sark, on the contrary, is almost wholly coast; the interior in comparison is a negligible quantity! And almost as much may be said of Alderney. Both these islands are exceedingly small—Sark being only a trifle more

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than three miles in length, and about one and three-quarters of a mile in breadth (measuring, not precisely from east to west, but at right angles to the axis); and Alderney being about three and a half miles in length, from north-east to south-west, and one and a quarter miles in breadth. Alderney is undoubtedly the less beautiful of the two, and is probably by far the least frequently visited of all the different members of the Norman archipelago. The voyage from St. Peter Port, in a very small boat, and made only two or three times in a week, is dreaded, and not without reason, by those for whom rough seas have no welcome. Alderney, again, is the least foreign of the Channel Islands in local colour, though nearest France in situation; and here the old Norman patois has been entirely replaced by English. It possesses in its capital, St. Anne, a small, old-fashioned country town that is wholly without parallel anywhere else in the islands. The harbour is at Braye, a short mile north from the centre of the town; and the visitor, in strong contrast with what happens at Sark, is landed in the least romantic corner of the island. Of the old church nothing now remains but a picturesque tower, and even this does not

Alderney

seem to be mediæval. The new church was erected from designs by Sir Gilbert Scott, and is, perhaps, the most striking modern building in the Channel Islands. The interior of Alderney, or Aurigny, to use the French form—

Her crew hath seen Castile's black fleet, beyond Aurigny's
isle—

is strongly individualized, and rather wild and remote. One feels at once that this little island has a flavour of its own—a state of things no longer felt among the villadom and glass-houses of Guernsey. The strength of Alderney, however, lies chiefly in its west and south coasts ; no one would visit the island except to visit these, or unless one happened to be an enthusiast for the world's neglected and inaccessible spots. I do not know how far the barbarous quarrying that was projected some six or seven years ago on the south side of the island has since been carried out, or how far it has injured the amenities of the coast. Anyhow, the Two Sisters, towards the south-west corner of the island, are hardly to be rivalled in their splintered grandeur, even in Jersey or Sark.

To Sark we come at last in our long explora-

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tion of the Channel Islands, and for Sark we may well be content to have waited patiently, and to have wandered far. For this, by universal acclamation, is certainly the gem of the whole group. Already we have often seen it in the distance—a long, level line of cliff (save where broken by the Coupée)—from the north coast of Jersey, or from the piers at St. Peter Port. Now, as we approach it more closely, threading the narrow strait between Herm and Jethou, and doubling the cliffs of Little Sark, at the south corner of the island, this hitherto unbroken, monotonous wall begins to resolve itself into an infinity of broken cliffs and promontories, isolating and half concealing a thousand fairy-like bays. Surely nowhere else is another coast like this—everywhere so irregular in its general trend and outline—everywhere so deeply bitten into by the mordant unrest of the sea. Sark, we have said already, is little else than coast; and certainly it is the coast which first arrests and charms us, and the coast which lingers last and most clearly in our memory, when other impressions begin to be obliterated, or vanish altogether in the steady lapse of years. Not a yard of this gracious girdle of cliff is monotonous, or



THE SISTER ROCKS, ALDERNEY.

This island is generally ignored by visitors to the group, but the quaint little town of St Anne and the fine rocks at the southern end are quite worth seeing.

Sark

repeats itself, or is even grim (as parts of the coast of Alderney are grim), or is relatively less interesting, or less beautiful, or dull; everywhere and always it is singularly lovely, and everywhere and always at the same high pitch. There is really very little to be said about Sark, except that the whole island is beautiful throughout: there is nothing to be gained by giving a long catalogue of successive promontories, caves, and bays. It was thus that Olivia made a schedule of her beauty—" *item*, two lips indifferent red; *item*, two grey eyes, with lids to them; *item*, one neck, one chin, and so forth"—and at the end of the inventory we have no better picture of the real Olivia than before she was thus appraised in detail.

The history of Sark, for so small an island, is unusually interesting, and in some respects instructive. It is set out by Miss Carey in an interesting chapter, and some of its episodes may be summarized here. Sark, like its sister islands, must have been occupied by neolithic man, for the remains of two poor dolmens still exist in the island, and formerly, no doubt, there were very many more. St. Magloire, in the sixth century, built a chapel and founded a small monastery in the

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island, but apparently he found it unpopulated when first he arrived. In the middle of the fourteenth century the island was inhabited by a crew of lawless wreckers, who were a menace to the navigation of the whole Manche. The merchants of Rye and Winchelsea then put their heads together, and agreed to do by subtlety what they could not effect by force. Landing on Sark with an armed force must well-nigh have been impossible, till Helier de Carteret cut his tunnel through the rocks, when he colonized the island in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The merchants, accordingly, constructed a piece of strategy that may well have been borrowed from the Trojan horse, but in that case was certainly invested with much ingenious detail of its own. The story is told by Sir Walter Raleigh in his *History of the World*, though, as Miss Carey points out, he post-dates the incident by some 200 years, and describes it as having occurred to the crew of a Flemish ship. "Yet by the industry of a gentleman of the *Netherlands* [the island] was in this sort regained. He anchored in the Road with one Ship, and, pretending the death of his Merchant, he besought the *French* that they might bury their Merchant in hallowed Ground, and

The Colonization of Sark

in the Chapel of that Isle. . . . Whereto (with Condition that they should not come ashore with any Weapon, not so much as with a Knife), the *French* yielded. Then did the *Flemings* put a coffin into their Boat, not filled with a Dead Carcass, but with Swords, Targets, and Harquebuzes. The French received them at their Landing, and, searching everyone of them so narrowly as they could not hide a Penknife, gave them leave to draw their Coffin up the Rocks with great difficulty. . . . The Flemings on the Land, when they had carried their Coffin into the Chapel, shut the Door to them, and, taking their Weapons out of the Coffin, set upon the French.'

The final settlement of Sark—which the French call Serq—dates only from the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when Helier de Carteret established himself on the then deserted island, and planted there forty families, whom he brought from his native Jersey. He also built a church, and instituted a Presbyterian Vicar, Cosmé Brevint—being himself a Presbyterian—who continued to hold office till his death in 1576, being one who spared, or flattered, no one, "great or small, in his reprehensions." It is rightly said that the constitution of Sark is still largely feudal in character. The

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land is parcelled out into the original forty holdings, and some of these are said still to be held by descendants of the original holders. The lord of the island is still the Seigneur, though the lordship has passed from the hands of the de Carterets—it is said that they were compelled to part with it by reason of their lavish expenditure on the thankless Stuart cause. In the so-called “Battery” at the back of the Manor-House is one of the old guns that were given by Elizabeth to Helier de Carteret. It is inscribed, “Don de Sa Majesté la Royne Elizabeth, au Seigneur de Serq, A.D. 1572.”

Of the smaller islands of the Norman archipelago only a word or two need be added here. Roughly halfway between Sark and Guernsey, and separated from each other by a narrow passage that is difficult to navigate by reason of its hidden rocks and surging tides, are the small twin islands of Jethou and Herm. The latter is now occupied by a German Prince, the great-grandson of the famous Prussian leader, the exact place of whose meeting with Wellington after the field of Waterloo—whether at Belle Alliance, or farther along the road towards Genappe—has often been made the topic of historical discussion, and is

Herm and Jethou

anyhow the subject of a well-known picture. Jethou is considerably the smaller of the two, and is principally devoted to the purpose of a rabbit-warren. In Herm are some remains of the old Chapel of St. Tugual, incorporated with the out-buildings of the present manor-house. Previous to 1770 Herm was inhabited by deer; and Mr. Bicknell tells us that they "used to take advantage of the tide to swim over to the Vale in Guernsey to feed, returning on the next tide." Certainly it is lucky that there are now no deer in Herm, since they would not find much pasture now at Vale.

Jethou and Herm belong to Guernsey, and once, no doubt, were physically parts of it. As seen from St. Peter Port, with Sark dimly descried on the distant horizon, they still contribute largely to Guernsey's most charming seascape. Alderney and Sark, again, have each their attendant isle. Jersey alone, though the biggest of them all, is a planet without a satellite. The islet peculiar to Sark is Brecqhou, or the Ile des Marchants, which lies off its west coast, and is separated from it by the narrow Gouliot Strait, only a few hundred yards wide. Though measuring more than seventy acres, and possessed of a

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small landing-place, it is at present as innocent of human habitation as was Sark itself immediately before the coming of Helier de Carteret. Burhou is situated at a considerably greater distance to the north-west of Alderney, from which it is separated by the never-resting Swinge. This is, perhaps, the least visited among all the lesser islands, as is Alderney itself among the major four.

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